

PRESS ARTICLE

27/08/2019

Success at Nestlé Special.T factory with CoboAccess_Pal leads Sidel to extend cobotic palletizing range to higher payload



Nestlé recently installed two units of CoboAccess™_Pal, an industrial, safe and easy-to-use cobotic palletizing solution from Sidel, at their site in Orbe (Switzerland). By automating the palletizing of their Special.T capsules, Nestlé Suisse SA Orbe gained higher pallet quality while offering increased ease-of-operations for their workers. The latter benefit was ensured by the solution's automation platform: based on the combination of PC and PLC, it allows better-controlled trajectories for improved cobot picking and placing. Due to the continued success and growing demand for collaborative solutions, Sidel recently extended and completed its cobotic palletizing range with a medium version that offers a higher payload, launched in May 2019.

The global market for tea is projected to grow by 7.9 billion dollars between 2017 and 2022 due to rising trends like premiumisation and the addition of exotic flavours in mature markets as well as tea's health positioning on a global scale.¹

Nestlé Suisse SA Orbe, a factory producing tea in capsules under the well-known Special.T brand, addresses this growing trend. "In the past, this plant, equipped with low and medium speed lines, was handling palletizing manually. As volume and productivity needed to increase, we were looking to use cobotic palletizing to avoid repetitive non-ergonomic tasks for operators. We wanted them to handle activities with higher added value", explains Cédric Rey, Fill & Pack Maintenance & Improvement Manager at Nestlé.

¹ Euromonitor International

Contact:

Public Relations
Tel: +39 0521 999 452
press@sidel.com

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The team at Nestlé Suisse SA Orbe approached Sidel with their cobotic requirements back in 2017, leveraging the long-standing relationship between the two companies. At the time, Sidel was already working on developing a new cobotic palletizing solution and was able to take the opportunity to directly embed the customer's requirements into their new programme.

Success at Nestlé Suisse SA Orbe with higher pallet quality

Nestlé Suisse SA Orbe was looking to use cobotics or collaborative robotics palletizing, an innovative Industry 4.0 technology. With this in mind, they required a robust, precise and user-friendly cobotic solution, working as an industrial answer to their challenge of pallet stability. Rey continues, "At our Orbe site, best in class pallet quality is absolute key, as our cases with the tea capsules are very light, long, and narrow. This is why accurate case placement on the pallet and tight layers are major requirements to guarantee pallet stability, avoiding that products are moving through the complete supply chain, respecting their full integrity and ultimately ending up in consumers' hands without any damages. Additionally, we also needed to ensure the safety of our operators. It was imperative that the same level of safety would be maintained after switching from manual labour to a cobotic technology, ensuring that the solution is working safely with no fences around it. For us, the user friendliness of the new cobotic solution was extremely important as well: for instance, an intuitive navigation of its HMI was a must."

Ensure better-controlled picking and trajectories

At the Orbe site, two cobotic palletizers have now been installed downstream along two Cermex SW21 compact side-loading case packers. These CoboAccess_Pal solutions feature an industrial automation platform based on the combination of PC and PLC. "This association makes sure the cobot performs better-controlled picking and trajectories, leading to greater pallet quality and stability, instrumental for smooth pallet transportation through the supply chain. Additionally, they allow for an immediate restarting of the machine in case of potential problems or emergency stops, and as such, minimise downtime," highlights Laurent Cristol, Strategic Account Director Nestlé, at Sidel.

Moreover, CoboAccess_Pal's HMI is well suited to meet the customer's requirement for a user-friendly solution. Based on an intuitive tablet approach navigation, the HMI facilitates the daily jobs for Nestlé Suisse SA Orbe operators, as they can access Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and maintenance sheets for easier and faster trouble shooting and root cause analysis. Sidel made sure to get the safety of the CoboAccess_Pal objectively validated by Apave in addition to the equipment's full compliance with European Machinery Directive 2006/42/EC. CoboAccess_Pal always performs case handling above the conveyor or the pallet station, which ensures that cases never fall on the floor, therefore adding to maximum protection. Cristol explains, "Not less important, CoboAccess_Pal is extremely easy to install. At the factory in

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Orbe, it took one week including commissioning time; plus it can be easily moved between lines in less than ten minutes.”

Sidel extends its cobotic palletizing range

Surfing on this customer’s success and crowning a list of several installations already working throughout the world, Sidel decided to extend its cobotic palletizing range. The portfolio has recently been enriched with CoboAccess_Pal M. Featuring a Fanuc CR-15iA robotic arm, the solution allows a higher payload while running at six cycles per minute. Equipped with DCS² software and the safe contact stop technology, the new cell becomes even more industrial and therefore better suited for a wider scope of applications and market categories.



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² Distributed Control System



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Katherina Riesner, Junior Consultant
Tel: +49 (0) 89 121 75 180
Email: sidel@fundh.de

For any other enquiries, please contact:
Sidel
Lucia Freschi, Public Relations Manager
Tel: +39 0521 999452/Cell: +39 3472632237
Email: lucia.freschi@sidel.com

Sidel is a leading provider of equipment and services solutions for packaging beverage, food, home and personal care products in PET, can, glass and other materials.

With over 40,000 machines installed in more than 190 countries, we have nearly 170 years of proven experience, with a strong focus on the factory of tomorrow with advanced systems, line engineering and innovation. Our 5,500+ employees worldwide are passionate about providing solutions that fulfil customer needs and boost the **performance** of their lines, products and businesses.

Delivering this level of performance requires that we stay flexible. We continuously ensure we **understand** our customers' changing challenges and commit to meeting their unique performance and sustainability goals. We do this through dialogue and by understanding the needs of their markets, production and value chains. In turn, we apply our solid technical knowledge and smart data analytics to ensure lifetime productivity reaches its full potential.

We call it **Performance through Understanding**.

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